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FOREIGN RELATIONS

On Two Fronts

Turbulence and bloody conflict embraced the U.S. from two far-flung fronts. One was the old and ugly war in South Viet Nam 6,500 miles away; the other was a raw, new and unexpected rebellion in the Dominican Republic, 600 miles off U.S. shores (see THE HEMISPHERE). On both fronts, President Lyndon Johnson last week acted swiftly with strength of purpose.

A Beneficent Intuition. Fully aware that another Communist island fortress, like Cuba, could sprout in the Caribbean, the President snapped into action at the first sporadic crackles of gunfire in Santo Domingo. Into the waters off the Dominican Republic, he ordered a task force of six ships carrying an assault detachment of 1,800 marines; as a contingency, he alerted Army airborne troops at Fort Bragg, N.C.

By midweek, having absorbed scores of reports, having thoroughly discussed the worsening crisis with his advisers, Johnson gave orders that sent the first detachment of U.S. marines since 1916 into Caribbean combat. Summoning congressional leaders of both parties to the Cabinet Room, he explained that there were more than 2,000 Americans in the Dominican Republic, and there was no other way to guarantee their safety. "Our people have to be protected, and we intend to protect them," he said.

Bluntly, Johnson told the leaders that he was not asking for their authority but that he wanted to tell them about it before they read it in the newspapers. Later, he went on television with a brisk, 2½-minute announcement: Some 400 marines had landed on the island; arrangements were being made to evacuate Americans and other nationals who asked to leave. The next day, as the pitch of battle rose, the President sent in more marines, plus paratroopers from Fort Bragg; by week's end reinforcements brought the total of U.S. fighting men to 7,000.

As was to be expected, there was criticism that the President was meddling in a domestic quarrel. Communists and a few suspicious Latin Americans condemned the use of U.S. troops. Complained Red China's press agency, Hsinhua: "The new intervention on the part of the U.S., which came at a moment when U.S. imperialism was wildly extending its aggression in Viet Nam, threw

further light on its hideous feature as the international gendarme." The U.S. Communist Party called it a return to "gunboat diplomacy." In Rio de Janeiro, the newspaper Jornal do Brasil said that Johnson's moves "represent the death certificate of the present structure of the inter-American system." But few responsible voices in the U.S. joined the criticism.

In dispatching troops early and swiftly to Santo Domingo, Johnson seemed to

to Viet Nam. And for the first time, U.S. marines went out in force to attack Viet Cong troops in the jungles near Danang airbase.

On a visit to the Vietnamese battleground last week, tough-talking Marine Commandant Wallace Greene Jr. was delighted with the new marine patrols. "The one job I want them to do is to find Viet Cong and kill them," he told reporters briskly in Saigon. "We got one today, and we're going



MARINE GUNNING FOR SNIPERS OUTSIDE U.S. EMBASSY IN SANTO DOMINGO
Americans needed protection. So did the Americas.

be following a correct and beneficent intuition. For by week's end it was clear that the Dominican war had already become a fateful turning point, that the fight to prevent a new Communist presence in the hemisphere would have to be decided then and there.

"Find Viet Cong." The President was equally decisive in his commitment on South Viet Nam, even though his domestic critics continued to raise the decibel count. He announced that a force of 17 Coast Guard cutters would soon be shipped out to take up patrol duty along the coast to help cut off North Vietnamese infiltration. Beyond that, following a visit by Presidential Representative Henry Cabot Lodge with Prime Minister Sir Robert Menzies, plans were made to send an 800-man combat force of Australians

to get more. Sure, we're suffering casualties, but we're going to be dealing out more. We're fighting a war here now."

As for the reason and rationale behind that war, the President told a White House press conference last week: "America has not changed her essential position. And that purpose is peaceful settlement. That purpose is to resist aggression. That purpose is to avoid a wider war. I say again that I will talk to any government, anywhere, any time, without any conditions; and if any doubt our sincerity, let them test us. Each time we have met with silence or slander or the sound of guns, but just as we will not flag in battle, we will not weary in the search for peace."

Replying to those who object to U.S. bombing in North Viet Nam, Johnson

said sharply: "Military targets have been the primary targets that we have attacked. There's no blood in a bridge made of concrete and steel. I do sometimes wonder how some people can be so concerned with our bombing a cold bridge of steel and concrete in North Viet Nam but never open their mouths about a bomb being placed in our embassy in South Viet Nam."

Chinese Weapons. Responding further to those who claim that the conflict is no more than a private civil war, Defense Secretary McNamara told another press conference that aggression by the North Vietnamese "has grown progressively more flagrant and more unconstrained."

No fewer than 39,000 North Vietnamese are fighting in the South, said McNamara, and the latest step has been the covert infiltration of a regular combat unit of the North Vietnamese army into South Viet Nam. Moreover, it appears that the Viet Cong main-force units, their regular units, are being entirely re-equipped and entirely retrained with the newest Chinese Communist family of weapons." To stem the flow of supplies from the North,

U.S. planes had knocked out a total of 24 railroad and highway bridges in the previous three weeks (see THE WORLD).

As Lyndon Johnson summed up at his press conference: "Wherever we have stood firm, aggression has been halted, peace has been restored and liberty has been maintained."

New Blow at Connally

One irritating stumbling block in American foreign policy is the 19-year-old Connally Reservation. Offered in Congress by Texas' late Democratic Senator Tom Connally, that legalism reserves for the U.S. the right to refuse jurisdiction of the World Court in cases involving U.S. interests. Supporters of the reservation argue that it is a safeguard of U.S. sovereignty. But opponents, including many international jurists, contend that it emasculates the World Court by depriving it of real judicial power. The American Bar Association has condemned the reservation from the beginning. Yet, so controversial is the question that in 1960 the A.B.A. reaffirmed its opposition only by a narrow 114-to-107 margin.

Last week the reservation came under fire from another organization—and a surprising one at that: the normally conservative U.S. Chamber of Commerce. By a vote of 174 to 82, the Chamber, at a meeting in Washington, called for repeal of the Connally Reservation. Said the Chamber: "Nations should settle their disputes by peaceful means, depending on law with justice rather than force, including acceptance of the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice without the so-called 'Connally Reservation.'"

In the view of Convention Delegate William A. Haugsted of El Monte, Calif., who led a spirited floor fight against the resolution: "The Chamber is veering away from the principles it has long believed in. The world is not ready for this yet." But Christian Science Monitor Editor in Chief Erwin Canham, who is a past president of the Chamber, expressed the majority's overriding view. American businessmen, he explained, have a greater stake than ever before in world trade, and are increasingly coming around to the idea that "progress in the direction of a world law system is sound."

LOW MARKS FOR THE PROFESSORS

The letter that arrived on Special Presidential Assistant McGeorge Bundy's desk came from 127 faculty members of St. Louis' Washington University. It fairly bulged with naive and loaded questions about U.S. policy in Viet Nam. "Who is the enemy?" it asked. "Who are our allies?" "What kind of proof must North Viet Nam provide to convince us that it is not intervening in South Viet Nam?" Is it true that Washington's real purpose "is to provoke China into action which would allow the United States to bomb targets in that country?" As a former Harvard dean and member of the academic community, the scholars advised, Bundy was morally obliged to give them the lowdown. Would he, therefore, be so good as to pop out to St. Louis in the next few days to do so?

The answer was no, he would not. Bundy, who can chill a polar bear with his codfish-cold scorn, replied that his schedule was crowded; besides, he could hardly accept "an invitation given on ten days' notice." There were, however, a few points he wanted to impress on the scholars. Wrote he, in his icy reply:

I CANNOT honestly tell you that I think your letter reflects great credit on its authors, either as a piece of propaganda or as a serious effort to engage in discussion.

The Corporative State. I find strange your assumption that a public official is somehow especially accountable to the profession in which he worked before coming to the Government. I have supposed that Government officials were supposed to work for all of the American people, and that a businessman was not especially accountable to business circles, a man from labor to the unions, or a professor to university people. The premise from which you appear to be working is that of the corporative state, and I myself do not find Mussolini a sound guide to the principles of public service. There is no reason why I should be especially accountable to you, even on the uncertain assumption that you are truly



McGEORGE BUNDY

representative of the academic community.

As to your specific question, who is the enemy, I direct your attention to the President's speech on April 7.* Your question is answered fully in that speech, which was on the record three days before you wrote.

You ask who are our allies. I do not share your judgment that the problem of public support for the South Vietnamese government is more severe now [than it was 18 months ago], and I certainly do not believe that there is general popular support for the Viet Cong in South Viet Nam. On the contrary, I think it plain, on the evidence of reliable observers from many countries, that the South Vietnamese as a people do not wish to be taken over by the Viet Cong.

Enough Said. I do not understand why a group of academic men, presumably careful students of the historical record, should frame a question about free elections on the premise that the men in Hanoi might permit such elections in North Viet Nam. Whatever may have been the hopes of the signers of the Geneva Agreements on this score, there is nothing in the record of the last ten years which suggests that this Communist regime is different from any other on this point. The center of the problem in South Viet Nam is to ensure the right of the people there to peaceful self-determination, and that is the purpose of the United States. That purpose is not advanced by the assumption that there is any serious prospect of genuinely free elections in the North or any likelihood that Hanoi will offer such elections.

There are other distortions in your letter, and other assumptions in its questions which are contrary to fact, but I may have written enough to suggest that if your letter came to me for grading as a professor of Government, I would not be able to give it high marks.

* At Baltimore's Johns Hopkins University, Lyndon Johnson declared: "The first reality is that North Viet Nam has attacked South Viet Nam; its object is total conquest."